



Inside Ag *August 8, 2007*

Organic Certification Program

The Colorado Department of Agriculture was accredited by USDA's National Organic Program in 2002 to certify crops and livestock as organic along with process handlers of those products under the national organic standards. Organic certification is granted to producers who produce their products without the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers. A producer must transition their ground for three years by using organic production methods prior to making application for organic certification.

After a producer submits their organic operating system plan, a representative from the department will conduct an onsite visit to confirm the producer is operating in compliance with the USDA national organic standards. Producers can receive a premium price in the market place when they sell their product as certified organic.

The Colorado Department of agriculture currently certifies over 150 operations in Colorado to produce crops, livestock, and processed products as organic. The organic industry in Colorado has been growing approximately 20% a year in keeping pace with the national growth average. In 2006 the department certified over 101,000 acres as organic.

A producer interested in receiving more information on organic certification can contact the department at 303-239-4149.